

Victory Times



1. II, Issue 25 Telling the Camp Victory story

March 14, 2006

MiTTs take jundi training to next level

Story and photo by 4th BCT PAO 4th Inf. Div.

Minutes away from the Karadah District in central Baghdad, Iraqi soldiers operate independently at a forward operating base, working to secure the city from terrorists.

Home to roughly 1,000 Iraqi Army Soldiers, FOB Honor is where the Iraqi Jundi, soldiers, take training to the next level with help from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

"Our mission is to develop a self-sufficient, self-sustaining and defensive capable army for Iraq," said 1st Sgt. Michael Welborn, noncommissioned officer-incharge, Company B, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Division, 4th BCT.

"This mission is greatly important," Welborn explained. "For us to transition out of the role we're in, not just as a MiTT team, but as an Army, we have to develop these units so they can take over our sectors and efficiently secure their own country."

Prior to the Cobra Brigade arriving in Baghdad, members of the 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. successfully trained the Iraqi Soldiers to master individual military skills at a level similar to what U.S. Army Soldiers learn during basic training, said Welborn.

"When we first arrived, all the Iraqi Soldiers were basically on the same level," Welborn said. "We used our first 40-45 days to assess where exactly they were at, in terms of operational capabilities and then, in turn, came up with a plan of action."

As the Iraqi brigade continues to evolve into a highly-capable fighting force, members of the Cobra transition teams focus on building a strong Iraqi noncommisioned officer corps and improving leadership abilities within the unit, said Staff Sgt. Seth Thomas, NCOIC, 1st Bn. MiTT maintenance.

"Right now, our main concern is getting the NCOs to take a leadership role within their units," he explained.

One of the biggest challenges the MiTT faces is figuring out how to bridge the cultural gap between the two forces, said Thomas.

In the old Iraqi army, officers and senior enlisted personnel routinely abused see MITT, page 3



An Iraqi soldier pulls security outside of a small media station in the Karadah District in central Baghdad.

Business Executives for National Security visit Marines

Story by Lance Cpl. Drew Hendricks

MNC-I PAO

Members of the Business Executives for National Security visited the Marines on Camp Victory in order to understand their wants, needs and concerns, Monday. BENS is a national, nonpartisan organization of business leaders who apply the lessons they have learned through their businesses to assist our country in the areas of safety and defense.

The group, headed by Joseph E. Robert Jr., chairman

and chief executive officer of J.E. Robert Companies, visited with Marines on their way through Camp Victory. Robert met with Marines for dinner to discuss their ideas and issues concerning America's role here.

Robert, whose son is serving

with Marine Recon, said he has a bit of a soft spot for Marines.

"I want to know what you need, what worries you or what you think America needs to know about your service out here," said Robert.

Most Marines, like Staff Sgt. see BENS, page 4

In today's Victory Times:

Page 2: Fire fighters control blaze at training base, forecast

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Iraqi, American fire fighters battle blaze

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Will Ackerman

447th AEG PAO

Iraqi and American firefighters battled a fire at a weapons training facility on the Victory Base Complex March 11.

Iraqi firefighters based at the training site responded to the fire after seeing black smoke billowing into the sky. The fire was too much for two fire trucks, and they called for assistance from American and Iraqi firefighters located throughout the complex, which is located adjacent to Baghdad International Airport.

"The Army (trainers) there said they used fire extinguishers initially, but the fire got too big," said Mario Jomantoc, a contractor at the site.

"We pushed water with our two trucks and then called for back-up," said Assad, the site's Iraqi fire chief. "The fire started suddenly getting big. We knew we couldn't handle it alone with our two trucks."

Camp Stryker's fire department called for assistance from firefighters at Sather Air Base, Camp Victory, Camp Liberty and Baghdad International Airport.



Firefighters from the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, prepare to battle a five-alarm blaze.

The 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron Fire Station crews were the first subsequent responders. Because the fire had burned for about 30 minutes, and rubber blocks lined the facility interior, billowing flames and thick, black smoke reached high into the afternoon sky.

"We were worried there might be people in the facility," said Tech. Sgt. Dennis Schipper, the Sather AB firefighter who took control as the incident commander. "We didn't (know) if there were occupants inside."

The Iraqi firefighters aggressively attacked the fire for a few minutes before the Sather team arrived. Schipper's team offensively attacked the fire, spraying about 5,000 gallons of water from their trucks.

With no hydrant systems, they and the other responding firefighters went on the "defensive" to try and save the adjoining dining facility and remaining indoor weapons training range.

"Our goal then was containment," he said.

They worked in concert with other responding firefighters to set up an "emergency" water tank. The system is a temporary water bladder the Sather AB fire truck sucked from to feed the firefighters' hoses.

The fire, which destroyed the east wing of the structure, burned until the early hours of Sunday. But smoke from the smoldering rubber was still seen drifting into the sky two days later.

The Iraqi and American firefighters said the challenges included no hydrants and difficulty communicating due to a language barrier. But they both agreed the joint training they perform each week paid

huge dividends when they came together to fight the fire, which was the largest most of them had ever fought. It was also the first real fire for some.

"Our (joint training) is very good," Assad said. "It makes it easy to work together. We worked like a team."

Most of the Iraqi firefighters have about three months of training. Schipper said they performed well under pressure.



Iraqi firefighters battle a blaze at a weapons training facility at Victory Base Complex, Iraq, Saturday.

"They were very aggressive and wanted to attack the fire from the interior of the structure. Once it determined that the fire in the east side of the facility unable to be extinguished, they were eager to assist our efforts protecting

the west wing," Schipper said.

For many of the Sather AB team, It was the first structural fire, but all the constant training paid off.

"We knew exactly what to do (because of our training), said Airman 1st Class Jose Flores, 447th ECES firefighter.

Schipper also praised the combined efforts of all the firefighters, utilities Airmen and KBR.

"It was a total team effort. Without everyone's involvement, the structure, along with the adjacent structures, could have been a total loss," Schipper said.

Camp Victory Three-day forecast

Wednesday



Sunny High: 82 F Low: 57 F

Thursday



Sunny High: 75 F Low: 54 F

Friday



Sunny High: 77 F Low: 53 F

MITT-

their power and distanced themselves from their subordinates, said Thomas. Leading by example was a foreign idea to most men in a position of power.

With this in mind, leaders of the 1st Bn. MiTT have developed a new phase of training for the Iraqi NCO.

For the first time in the new Iraqi Army, NCOs will conduct a 41-day training cycle, which is scheduled to start this month, said Welborn.

The training is aimed to improve soldiering skills at the individual, squad, platoon and company levels. The instruction will place emphasis on leadership and discipline, he explained.

The leadership training the Iraqi NCOs receive is modeled after the U.S. Army system but is tailored specifically for the Iraqi Army, said Thomas.

"We are teaching them the basic leadership skills, so they can turn around and teach their own soldiers," explained Thomas. "(U.S. Army Sergeants) can't go out there and train an Iraqi NCO's Soldier, that would be setting the wrong example," said Thomas.

"If their own NCOs train their junior Soldiers, they will look up to them as leaders and subject matter experts, basically making them more self-sufficient," he said

Iraqi leadership is not the only thing the Cobra MiTT is concerned with as it continues to ensure the success of the 5th Bde.

The transition teams are working to fix the administrative capabilities within Iraqi staff sections, Welborn said.

The Cobra MiTT has helped restructure the brigade into separate sections that focus on administrating areas such as personnel, intelligence, logistics and communications, but challenges still exist.

The division deals with unpredictable electricity, limited internet connection and other technological barriers.

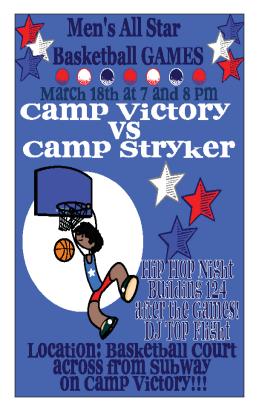
They previously logged all of their plans and logistics with pens and paper, but the new systems will bring the unit up to speed, Welborn said.



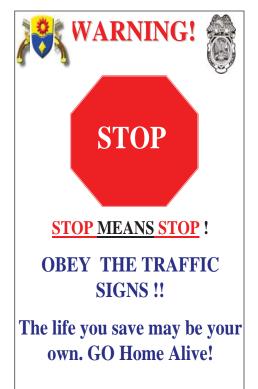
Eye Protection

Lt. Anthony Aguilar, platoon leader, Company B, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Mosul, Iraq, was wearing his protective eyewear when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle Feb. 28. His protective eyewear blocked a piece of shrapnel from hitting his face, saving his eyesight and preventing serious injury.









BENS.

Jesse L. Weinert, administrative chief, Marine Corps, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, voiced no real concerns except the ones they have for their families.

"The only thing I worry about is their well being," said Weinert. "I want to make sure they know I am proud of what I'm doing out here, and that they are being taken care of."

After the discussions quieted down, Robert handed out a truck load of goodies he brought for the Marines. From some of the latest feature films released on DVD to gift certificates for music, the Marines went home with pockets full of gifts.

"It's a small way to say thank you for your service," said Robert.

According to Robert, the media makes it seem like the morale here is extremely low, but from what he sees it is the exact opposite of that here.

This is why it is important to talk to the servicemembers in person, added Robert. In order to get the real perspective you need to hear their side of the issue.

Joseph E. Robert Jr., chairman of J.E. Robert Companies. passes out DVD's to Marines during his visit. Members of the Business Executives for National Security visited Marines on Camp Victory in order to get a feeling for their needs and concerns.



BEAT THE EXPERT



MARCH MADNESS 2006 NCAA TOURNAMENT ROUND 1 TIP-OFF



Sgt. Maj. Paul Stevenson sergeant major/ MNC-I PAO

Vs.

Spc. Brian J. Anderson editor/ MNC-I PAO

Syracuse UAB George Mason

Wisconsin Montana UW-Milwaukee (5) Syracuse vs. (12) Texas A&M (8) Kentucky vs. (9) UAB

George Mason (6) Michigan State vs. (11) George Mason

(8) Arizona vs. (9) Wisconsin

(5) Nevada vs. (12) Montana (6) Oklahoma vs. (11) IJW-Mil

(6) Oklahoma vs. (11) UW-Milwaukee Texas A&M Kentucky Michigan State

Arizona Nevada Oklahoma

ACT EXAMS

AVAILABLE APRIL 23, 2006

1 p.m.

TESTING SEATS ARE LIMITED
CONTACT THE EDUCATION CENTER
FOR INFO AT
DSN 822-5183/4640

OR educationcenter@iraq.centcom.mil Sgt. Kurt Applegate (left), concrete and heavy equipment operator, and Pvt. Marshon Moore, truck driver, both of Equipment Platoon, Headquarters Support Company, 62nd Engineer Battalion, dig rough concrete out of a crater to prepare for pouring a new cement fill.



Photo by Spc. Jake Judge, 363rd MPAD

Operating hours

Coalition Cafe

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m. Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. Dinner 5:30 - 8 p.m. Midnight Dining 11 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Sports Oasis

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a m Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. Dinner 5:30 - 9 p.m.

Shopette

Open 24 Hours

Camp Liberty Post Exchange

Everyday 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Fitness Center

Open 24 Hours

Post Office

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday - 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sunday 1 - 5 p.m.

Golby Troop Medical Clinic Sick Call Hours:

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon **Dental Sick Call:**

Monday - Friday 7:30 - 10:30 a.m. Saturday 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Mental Health Clinic:

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

Post Deployment Health Briefings:

Monday - Friday 1 p.m.

Pharmacy:

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon, 1 - 4:30 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday 7:30 a.m. - noon

Legal Assistance/Claims

Saturday - Thursday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Friday 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Personnel Service Support Centers

Monday - Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

ID Cards

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.





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Wed. 2 - 8 p.m.

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Contact Camp Liberty Post Office for any questions. DSN 302-242-4391

MNC-I. CAMP VICTORY. BAGHDAD

TEXAS HOLD'EM TOURNAMENT

OPEN TO ALL PERSONNEL

Tournaments will be held twice a month (the second

Limited to 48 people (6 tables), please sign up early.

Sqt. Joseph Mahoney DSN: 822-2065

Prizes will be awarded to the winner.

Walk-ins are welcome if space is available.

CONTACT INFORMATION: For information or to sign up for

TOURNAMENT RULES: basic rules are included w/ this email

and last Mondays)

March's tournaments call or email:



Is container management a pain in your neck? One call, that's all! We can help ease your pain.



Container management made easy by utilizing the Container Management Support Tool (CMST). An easy to use web based program designed to ease your container management troubles. Contact us to coordinate training. Just give us a call, we're here to help!

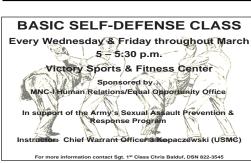
> Lt. Col. Kennington 318-822-5419

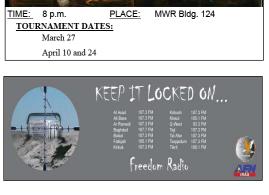
Master Sgt. Johnson 318-822-5317











Submit letters from home

Is your loved one deployed in support of Multi-National Corps-Iraq? Would you like to write him or her a message in the Victory Times? Send messages, three to four lines of text to brian.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil. Ensure to include Soldiers name, rank, and unit.

Victory Times welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from our readers. Send submissions or comments to brian.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil.

We reserve the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity and space.



Don't be the OTHER driver!!

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